

Current and Pending Issues for Maryland of concern to the housing, building and development industry...

STATE OF MARYLAND

- The ***STATE ECONOMY*** and the resulting impact on state and local jurisdiction budgets have the potential for serious repercussions for the industry. Local government has traditionally seen the production of new housing as a source of revenue for county operations; as the State reduces or eliminates state funding for county operations, it is likely that local governments will increase existing impact fees and/or initiate new fees and taxes to supplement lost state revenues.
- ***ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES*** are a key area. The recently released ***Stormwater Management Regulations*** and anticipated enhanced ***Erosion & Sediment Control requirements*** to be released by MDE late October have the potential to add major costs to existing and proposed development projects, if not shut them down completely, while ignoring data and statistics that show minimal run off impact from new development compared to existing communities and agriculture. Additionally, it is anticipated that there will be more pressure for increased enforcement of existing regulations accompanied by increased penalties and fees. Another issue of concern is ***nitrogen reduction for septic system retrofits*** and expanding this requirement to include new construction throughout the State (beyond the Critical Areas currently mandated) and the expansion of ***“Standing”*** beyond environmental concerns.
- ***THE TOLLING ISSUE (FOR PLANS AND PERMITS)*** is expected to be reintroduced in the 2010 Legislative Session and could continue to be a concern through 2010.
- A ***VISITABILITY*** interim study is currently underway. A mandated requirement for zero step entrance may be reintroduced and needs monitoring.

CALVERT COUNTY

- ***EXPANSION OF CALVERT CLIFFS POWER PLANT*** could have significant positive repercussions for the industry as the Power Plant pays taxes to the County that could offset the need to raise property taxes.
- Recent changes to the ***COMPREHENSIVE PLAN*** and impact on development opportunities have potential repercussions with the anticipated build-out date for the County
- The ***LOCAL STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE*** that needs to be in place by May of 2010 will put constraints on the development within the Town Centers and could make it difficult to achieve densities envisioned, e.g. Solomons Island Town Center. This is a major *conflict between desired growth and development and the environmental agenda*
- ***GREEN BUILDING*** is headed for a conflict between competing forces for a mandatory vs. non-mandated program

CHARLES COUNTY

- **GREEN BUILDING** is an issue in Charles County where consideration is being given to requirements that include a LEED element.
- **THE CROSS COUNTY CONNECTOR** is a major issue with environmental opposition similar to the fight waged in Montgomery County against the Inter County Connector.
- An emerging issue is the potential for civic activists to seek a **REDUCTION IN THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT** to conform to the Priority Funding Areas, thus reducing areas that can be developed.
- **SCHOOL REDISTRICTING**, a process supported by the industry, is under consideration by the County and could become a major issue.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

- **TRANSPORTATION ISSUES INCLUDING THE PURPLE LINE, THE ICC AND NEW ROAD CONSTRUCTION** continue to be key issues in the County. The industry supports these key transportation projects but there continues to be vocal sustained opposition from environmental and civic groups.
- The **COUNTY GROWTH POLICY** and the position of the elected leadership on PAMR and impediments to the utilization of available PAMR mitigation options are issues for exploration
- **STREAMLINING OF THE PARK & PLANNING PROCESS** – a key issue for focus and action by the elected leadership
- The County has a **TASK FORCE ON WORKFORCE HOUSING** but direction and goals are yet to be clarified and defined.
- **GREEN BUILDING AND CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES** have been proposed by several Council members with no clarification of goals or direction.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

- A **GREEN BUILDING BILL** is anticipated to be sponsored by Councilman Eric Olson in 2010 with a focus on public buildings and commercial and no residential component.
- **THE PURPLE LINE** is a significant issue in the County.. The industry supports the Purple Line which has been endorsed by the Governor but there continues to be vocal sustained opposition from environmental and civic groups and some question of broad support from County elected officials..
- **COUNTY REVENUE SHORTFALLS** will continue to be an issue with new development vulnerable to impact fee proposals to (theoretically) raise new revenues. This will conflict with the industry goal of achieving delays or elimination of county impact fees and taxes in view of the economic recession
- The **DEVELOPMENT/PERMIT PROCESS** continues to be a major problem and impediment to building and housing production.

- The M-NCP&PC Commission is expected to announce a ***NEW MIXED USE ZONE*** intended to encourage the industry to build quality projects desired by the County. Does this new Zone have the support of elected officials?
- ***TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDRs)*** was the key issue in 2008. There is potential for the Council to raise the issue again in 2010.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY

- ***GREEN BUILDING*** is a key issue for the County.
- The ***PATUXENT RIVER NAVAL BASE EXPANSION*** could significantly affect development and building opportunities
- The ***EXTENSION OF TOLLING FOR PERMITS AND PLANS*** is a current issue